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II WKG 4.7

DEPARTMENT OF WORKING GROUP REPORT

II. THE GERMAN QUESTION



Although German reunification does not appear negotiable at this time, it remains the only basis for a real settlement of the German question and must be kept alive as an issue. The Western Powers should therefore initiate discussions of the German question (whether in its broader or its Berlin aspects) by calling for renewed discussions on the basis of the Western Peace Plan. The reunification sections of the Plan require no amendment, but the security sections should be reviewed prior to the Summit in the light of developments in the disarmament field.

The Western Powers might most effectively counter the Soviet Union's probable demand for the conclusion of a peace treaty with the "two German states" through a proposal that a plebiscite be carried out in all parts of Germany, under conditions which assure freedom of expression, in which the German people would opt for (1) the conclusion of a peace treaty with the freely elected government of a reunified Germany, as proposed by the Three Powers and the FRG, or (2) the conclusion of separate peace treaties with the FRG and the "GDR", with the relations of the two to be left to the FRG and the "GDR" to settle, as proposed by the Soviet Union and the "GDR".

(More detailed discussion of the German question will be found in Annex).

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DRAFT ANNEX TO WORKING GROUP REPORT

THE GERMAN QUESTION

Reunification as Western Goal

It is an unalterable principle of Western policy that Germany must be reunified in peace and freedom. The division of Germany is a source of continuing tension and potential danger; there can be no real security in Europe without German reunification. As long as their country remains divided, the German people as a whole cannot enjoy the self-determination which is their right nor the stability and freedom which has become their greatest aspiration and which the Three Powers undertook special responsibilities to secure. Only reunification can relieve the population of East Germany of the oppression of a tyrannical regime, and the removal of East Germany from Soviet domination would offer the best promise of an eventual restoration of freedom in Eastern Europe as a whole. Reunification is the only basis for a genuine solution of the German problem (including its Berlin aspects), and it would be an illusion to believe that any partial or temporary palliatives could significantly diminish the risks which this problem holds for the Western Powers.

Reunification Not Negotiable Now

There is, however, little reason to believe that reunification in the Western sense, i.e. based on self-determination of the German population, is negotiable now or will be negotiable within the foreseeable future. The Soviet Union has good reason to believe that, with the passage of time, it will be able to make increasingly effective use of the mask of the "German Democratic Republic" in accomplishing its purposes

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in Germany. Years of discussions have made it increasingly clear that the Soviet Union will not loosen its hold on that part of Germany which it now controls except under conditions which offer a good chance of extending Communist control over all of Germany, i.e. reunifying Germany in the Communist sense.

Secondary Goal - Keeping Reunification Issue Alive

The immediate task of the Western Powers must therefore be to keep the issue of reunification in peace and freedom alive until genuine negotiation is possible, i.e. until a more conciliatory attitude evolves in the Soviet Union or until there is a shift in the balance of power in favor of the Western Powers. Meanwhile, the Western Powers must content themselves with constantly restating their case to world opinion, in fresh terms whenever possible, and with attempting to alleviate some of the practical problems (notably the problems of Berlin) which arise as a result of the continued division of Germany. Any discussion of the German question, whether in its broader or narrower (Berlin) aspects, which takes place within the framework of responsibilities deriving from quadripartite agreements can assist in the accomplishment of the secondary objective of keeping the issue alive. The Western Powers must, however, avoid courses of action which could blur the basic issue or hinder an eventual fundamental solution of the German problem. In particular, they must bear in mind that the "reunification" slogan still has enormous appeal to the German population and that their own reticence in using this slogan might permit the Soviet Union to move from the defensive to

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the offensive and press more effectively for "reunification" in the Communist sense.

Western Peace Plan

The logical opening position for the Western Powers in the Summit discussion of the German question is a renewed presentation of the Western Peace Plan presented by the Western Foreign Ministers at Geneva on May 14, 1959. The Western Heads of Government may properly point out that the Plan represents a new approach which was carefully thought out in the light of earlier negotiating differences and which amounts to a compromise in comparison with the earlier Western position (e.g. the Eden Plan). They might point out that the Plan was never properly discussed at the Geneva Foreign Ministers' meeting of 1959 and recommend that the Foreign Ministers be directed to study and report on it.

With respect to the substance of the Plan, the reunification sections (including the Berlin section) require no amendment. The security sections should be reviewed prior to Summit, however, in the light of developments in the field of disarmament.

Soviet Peace Treaty Proposal

It is to be expected that the initial Soviet position in any discussion of the German question will be a reiteration of the proposal that the Four Powers conclude peace treaties with the FRG and the "GDR" or with a "confederation" of the two. The Soviet proposal will probably be accompanied with a statement that the Soviet Union will be compelled to

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conclude a separate peace treaty with the "GDR" if the Western Powers do not accept its proposal.

"Confederation of the Two German States"

In mentioning the possibility of concluding a peace treaty with a "confederation" of the "two German states" the Soviets would be making an obeisance to the principle of German unity from which they might derive some propaganda advantage but which would in no way affect their basic position. The "GDR" has made it clear that it regards a "confederation" at the most as the acceptance by the FRG of the legitimacy of the "GDR" plus a unilateral alignment of the foreign policy of the FRG with that of the "GDR".

Principles of a Peace Treaty

The Western Powers might respond to the Soviet peace treaty proposal with a proposal for the discussion of the principles which would be embodied in a peace treaty to be concluded with a reunified Germany. The Soviet Union would probably reply that the Western principles dealt to a great extent with internal matters to be regulated by the "two German states" and that the purpose of a peace treaty would be merely to terminate the problems arising from the war, i.e. to recognize the "GDR", to "normalize" Berlin's status and relations to the "GDR", and to withdraw foreign troops from Germany. Although a proposal for discussion of the principles of a peace treaty involves the risk of giving additional currency to the Soviet "peace treaty" slogan, the possible tactical use of such a proposal to continue quadripartite discussions of the question of Germany (including Berlin) should not be excluded.

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All-German Plebiscite on Peace Treaty

Bearing in mind that the best the Western Powers can hope to obtain at the Summit would be to keep the basic issue underlying the German question alive, their most suitable response to the Soviet peace treaty proposal (after pressing for discussions on the basis of the Western Peace Plan) would be a dramatic emphasis on the principle of self-determination. This is all the more true because the Soviet Union has shown sensitivity to the importance of this principle to world opinion. Specifically, the Western Powers might counter a Soviet peace treaty proposal by calling for a plebiscite, to be carried out in all parts of Germany under conditions which assured freedom of expression, in which the German people would opt for (1) the conclusion of a peace treaty with the freely elected government of a reunified Germany, as proposed by the Three Powers and the FRG, or (2) the conclusion of separate peace treaties with the FRG and the "GDR" with the relations between the FRG and the "GDR" to be left to the "two states" to settle, as proposed by the Soviet Union and the "GDR". (The plebiscite idea is discussed more fully in II WNO/4.6, a copy of which is attached.) Even if the plebiscite proposal were rejected by Khrushchev out of hand, which might be expected, it would still have much of its desired effect.

All-German Committee

Khrushchev might seize on the mention in the Western Peace Plan of

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a mixed committee of representatives of the FRG and the "GDR" to propose, as the Soviet Union did in connection with the discussion of the Berlin question at the Foreign Ministers meeting at Geneva in 1959, the establishment of an all-German committee in which representatives of the "two German states" would consider the peace treaty question and work out measures for the development of contacts which could eventually lead to reunification. It is conceivable that all-German discussions could be conducted under Four-Power auspices and that the representatives could be considered in effect as the German advisers of the Western Powers and of the Soviet Union carrying out technical discussions which could assist the Four Powers in making political decisions. The views of the Federal Republic should be guiding as to the limits of the acceptable in this delicate area of activity. From the Soviet point of view the idea of an all-German committee would presumably be a variant of the "confederation" idea. Western overtures for technical discussions might be countered with Eastern demands for political discussions, and the Soviet Union would insist on the competence of the "GDR" to make "sovereign" decisions on these political questions.

Discussion of German Question in Narrower Aspects

Any discussion of the German question can be expected to be reduced quickly to a discussion of the problem of Berlin. However, the Western Powers will find themselves at a disadvantage, both in negotiation and in dealing with public opinion, if they permit the Soviet Union to beg

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the question as to what the Berlin problem really is. The Western Powers can live with the existing situation in Berlin; the maintenance of this situation has become a problem for the Soviet Union only because the Soviet Union has deliberately made it a problem. Before being drawn into a discussion of the Berlin problem and in order to show the Berlin problem in its proper perspective, the Western Powers should stress the problems which concern the West, i.e. not only the continued division of Germany but also the unrepresentative, oppressive, and militaristic nature of the regime in the Soviet-occupied area and the exploitation of the Soviet-occupied area for agitation and propaganda which aggravates tension and for the harassment of Berlin.

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